(b) The recommendations of the Law Commission have been considered and the Government has agreed in principle to set up an Armed Forces Tribunal for hearing appeals against orders of Court Martials and for adjudication of service matters of Armed Forces personnel. A Bill seeking to set up the Tribunal is being finalised.

(c) Establishment of a Tribunal does not bar the writ jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and High Courts.

Steps to prevent another Kargil like situation

329. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item under the caption 'Pak preparing for another Kargil? New Militant outfit being formed' which was published in the "News Times" dated the 17th June, 2000;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government would take any concrete steps to prevent another Kargil like conflict this year and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) All appropriate measures have been taken to thwart Pak designs. Our troops are well equipped, prepared and motivated to meet any eventuality.

POWs in Pak Jails

330. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 54 of our defence officers and men are rotting in Pakistan jails for the past 28 years;

(b) whether the issue of release of POWs was discussed during the recent visit of the group from the Human Rights Commission from Pakistan;

(c) if so, what have been the outcome thereof; and

(d) what positive steps are being taken to see that the POWs are returned to India at the earliest possible?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d)